

# DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 033 928

TE 001 556

AUTHOR Gast, David K.  
TITLE Mincrity Americans in Children's Literature.  
Pub Date Jan 67  
Ncte 13p.  
Journal Cit Elementary English; v44 n1 p12-23 Jan 1967  
EDRS Price MF-\$0.25 HC-\$0.75  
Descriptors American Indians, \*Childrens Books, Chinese Americans, Cultural Images, Cultural Traits, Discriminatory Attitudes (Social), Ethnic Groups, \*Ethnic Stereotypes, Japanese Americans, Majority Attitudes, \*Minority Groups, Negroes, Racial Discrimination, Religious Discrimination, \*Social Discrimination, \*Scciccultural Patterns, Spanish Americans, Textbook Eias

## Abstract

Children's fiction written between 1945 and 1962 was analyzed for current stereotypes of minority Americans, and the results were compared with related studies of adult fiction and school textbooks. Two analytic instruments were applied to 114 mincrity characters selected from 42 children's books about American Indians, Chinese, Japanese, Negroes, and Spanish Americans currently living in the United States. In this sampling, virtually no negative stereotypes of mincrity Americans were found; the differences in race, creed, and customs of mincrity citizens were found to be dignified far more than in either adult magazine fiction or textbooks; and similarities in behavior, attitudes, and values between majority and mincrity Americans were emphasized rather than their differences. (Recommendations for action to be taken on the basis of the results, proposals for further experimental study, and a table ranking the verbal stereotypes of the 114 minority American characters are included.) (JF)

ED033928

# ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

An official organ of The NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

508 S. Sixth St., Champaign, Ill.

FOUNDED, 1924, BY C. C. CERTAIN

WILLIAM A. JENKINS, *Editor*

University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee

(Send all editorial communications to 3203 N. Downer Avenue, Milwaukee, Wis. 53211)

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XLIV

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No. 1

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ELEMENTARY ENGLISH is published monthly October through May by The National Council of Teachers of English, 508 South Sixth Street, Champaign, Illinois. Subscription rate \$7.00 per year. Single copy \$1.00. Postage is prepaid on all orders for the United States (and all other countries with the same postage rates). Extra postage is charged for Canada and for all other countries in the Postal Union at the rate of 48 cents per annual subscription (total \$7.48). Remittances should be made payable to The National Council of Teachers of English by check, money order, or bank draft. The publishers expect to supply missing numbers free only when the losses have been sustained in transit, when the request for the missing number is made during the month following the month of publication, and when the reserve stock will permit. All business communications regarding orders, subscription, single copies, and advertising should be addressed to the National Council of Teachers of English, 508 South Sixth Street, Champaign, Illinois. All manuscripts and correspondence about the contents of the magazine should be addressed to ELEMENTARY ENGLISH, Dr. William A. Jenkins, University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee, 3203 N. Downer Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211. Entered as second class matter December 30, 1942, at the post office in Champaign, Illinois, under the act of March 3, 1879. Additional entry at Danville, Illinois.

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Printed in the U.S.A.

TE 001 556

# Minority Americans in Children's Literature

## Introduction

The social and economic integration of minority peoples in America has been a slow process ever since the first colonists took land from the native Americans. But it has been especially slow for American citizens of American Indian, Chinese, Japanese, African, and Spanish descent, who, by virtue of their racial, religious, and other ethnic characteristics, have been largely excluded from the mainstream of dominant culture in the United States.

Social scientists of the present day generally agree that there are no inherent cultural predispositions or traits among people of different races or geographical areas, but that man is a product of his cultural environment. The shaping of this product begins at birth. Children literally "learn what they live." They learn prejudice against, and intolerance of, people who are racially, religiously, and culturally different from themselves. In turn, the objects of prejudice internalize the self-debasing concepts that are held of them in the mirror of the majority. The source of these learnings can be traced to parents and other adults, peers, mass and minor media, and teaching materials. The American public school, functioning as a social sorting and screening device with Protestant, white, middle-class bias, has not always facilitated integration of the minority American into the mainstream of

dominant culture, nor has it effectuated, through its academic portrayal of minority Americans, a social conscience on the part of the majority American. Studies of past and present teaching materials have shown that the American of minority race, creed, or color, has not been given fair representation in school textbooks.<sup>1</sup> The role of the minority American in the development of our country has largely been neglected. When he does appear in textbooks, the minority American is stereotyped.

But textbooks are not the only teaching materials that convey concepts of intergroup relations to school-age children. One source of such learning has been children's literature. Yet very few studies have been designed to analyze the images of minority groups as presented to children in fictional literature. The limited research which has been done has shown that minority peoples have been stereotyped and that stereotypes are perpetuated in the face of the changing reality of social fact. The need for a current investigation into the nature of characterizations of minority Americans in contemporary children's literature has been clearly indicated in previous studies.<sup>2</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup>American Council on Education, Committee on the Study of Teaching Materials in Intergroup Relations, *Intergroup Relations in Teaching Materials*. Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1949; Lloyd A. Marcus, *The Treatment of Minorities in Secondary School Textbooks*. New York: Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 1961; Abraham Tannenbaum, "Family Living in Textbook Town," *Progressive Education*, 31 (March, 1954), 133-40, 166-67.

<sup>2</sup>American Council on Education, Committee on

purpose of the present study<sup>3</sup> has been to fill this need.

### The Problem

The problem of this investigation consisted of an analysis of characterizations of minority group Americans as presented in contemporary children's literature. Answers were sought for the following questions: (1) What are the characteristics of and concepts about present-day American Indians, Chinese, Japanese, Negroes, and Spanish-Americans in contemporary children's fiction? (2) What are the identifiable stereotypes imputed to minority Americans in the literature? (3) How does treatment of minority Americans in contemporary children's fictional literature compare with that in related studies of adult magazine fiction and school instructional materials?

Three hypotheses were established for the study: (1) Stereotypes of American Indians, Chinese, Japanese, Negroes, and Spanish-Americans are not found in children's literature. (2) Treatment of minority Americans in recent literature dignifies the differences in race, creed, and custom of minority peoples. (3) Treatment of minority Americans in recent literature emphasizes similarities rather than differences among minority and majority Americans with regard to behavior patterns, attitudes, and values.

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Intergroup Education in Cooperating Schools, Hilda Taba, director, *Literature for Human Understanding*. Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1948, p. vi; Marie L. Ram, "Analysis of the Lois Lenski Literature from a Sociological Point of View (Parts One and Two)," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Buffalo, Buffalo, New York, 1958, as reported in *Dissertation Abstracts*, 19 (June, 1959) 3308.

<sup>3</sup>This paper is based on the writer's doctoral dissertation: David Karl Gast, "Characteristics and Concepts of Minority Americans in Contemporary Children's Fictional Literature," unpublished doctoral dissertation, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona, June, 1965.

### The Population

The population of the study was defined as all children's fiction in book form about present-day (1945-1962) American Indians, Chinese, Japanese, Negroes, and Spanish-Americans, first published between 1945 and 1962 for kindergarten through eighth-grade reading levels and noted in one or more of the following guides: H. W. Wilson Company's *Children's Catalog*, tenth edition, 1961, and the 1962 and 1963 supplements to the tenth edition; The American Library Association's *A Basic Book Collection for Elementary Grades* and *A Basic Book Collection for Junior High Schools*, both published in 1960; the American Library Association's *Subject Index to Books for Primary Grades*, second edition, 1961, and *Subject Index to Books for Intermediate Grades*, second and third editions, 1950 and 1963 respectively.

Books included in the study were identified by one or more of the following factors in the listings: (1) book title and bibliographical data; (2) Sears Subject Index heading; (3) grade reading level; and (4) resumé or review of the book. This technique insured inclusion of books exhibiting most of the necessary characteristics. Four required definitions of the population that could not always be identified in the listings were: (1) contemporaneity of the story; (2) a continental United States setting; (3) minority characters of U.S. citizenship; and (4) minority Americans in significant roles in the story.

After an initial selection, forty-two books met the criteria established for the population and were analyzed as a total sample.

### The Method

To obtain the characterizations, concepts, and stereotypes in children's literature dealing with contemporary American minorities, the investigator devised two

analytic instruments based on the Berelson and Salter technique.<sup>4</sup> The Katz and Braly List of Verbal Stereotypes<sup>5</sup> was also employed as a measure of stereotyping. These instruments were applied to the literature by three coders and the investigator.<sup>6</sup>

The analytic operations took two forms, based on two units of analysis defined by Berelson as the "character" and the "item."<sup>7</sup> The first unit of analysis, an example of "character" analysis, dealt with the major and minor characters in the story. This unit was in two parts; first, the coding of seven characteristics for each of the characters; and second, the application of the Katz and Braly list to each of the characters to discover stereotypes. The character instrument, Form C, was used for this unit of analysis. The second unit, an example of "item" analysis, dealt with each book as a whole to ascertain the concepts, explicit and implicit, in the story. The book instrument, Form B, was used for this unit of analysis. The coding of the seven characteristics constituted "What Is Said" categories,<sup>8</sup> while the application of the Katz and Braly List of Verbal Stereotypes and item analysis of explicit

and implicit concepts in the stories constituted "How It Is Said" categories.<sup>9</sup>

There was an *a priori* definition and delimitation of terms with respect to descriptions in the various categories of characteristics given to the coders. A brief analysis preceded the study to discover the need for further definitions and refinements of terms and agreement among the coders in regard to the categories of analysis.

The characterizations in each book were limited to one major character and a maximum of five minor characters. Characters were selected by the first coder to read the book. In the case of disagreement among the coders, the judgment was based on majority opinion of the coders and the investigator.

In the first unit of analysis, the seven characteristics for which data were secured were: role in the story (major or minor); physical traits (age, sex, general physical description); status position (occupation, economic status, educational level, social class); social origin (racial or ethnic group, religion); personality traits; goals and values; and plus-minus position (general approval-disapproval of a character by others in the story). Documentation in the form of a phrase or full sentence quotes was supplied by the coders for each decision as to the characteristics chosen. Since pictorial representations are significant in children's literature, especially at the lower-grade reading levels, coders also used documented pictorial clues as a basis for judgment on characteristics. The data for each characteristic were tabulated and charted separately for each minority. Further analysis was facilitated on each chart by separate enumerations for (1) male-female, (2) major character-minor character, and (3) age: children (1-12

<sup>4</sup>Bernard Berelson and Patricia Salter, "Majority and Minority Americans: An Analysis of Magazine Fiction," *Mass Culture*, Bernard Rosenberg and David Manning White, editors. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1957, pp. 235-51.

<sup>5</sup>Daniel Katz and Kenneth Braly, "Racial Stereotypes of One Hundred College Students," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 28 (October-December, 1933) 280-90.

<sup>6</sup>The coders who participated in the study were a San Diego State College professor of elementary English and children's literature holding an Ed.D degree, a San Diego State College librarian with an M.S. in Library Science degree in public school librarianship, and an elementary school teacher with an M.A. in Education degree.

<sup>7</sup>Bernard Berelson, "Content Analysis," *Handbook of Social Psychology*, Vol. I, Gardner Lindzey, editor. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1954, p. 509.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 510.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 511.

years of age), teenagers (13-19 years of age), adults (20-59 years of age, or parents in story presentations), and old-timers (60 years of age and older or grandparents in story presentations).

The second part of the first unit of analysis required the coders to choose five adjectives from the Katz and Braly list which best described each of the characters analyzed. These words were compiled for each minority group analyzed and listed in rank order of mention to determine stereotypes of the various minority Americans. Charting procedure of this data was identical to that of the characteristics above.

The second unit of analysis concerned itself with the concepts or "lessons" in the story and involved the use of Form B. This form was filled out only after each character in the book had been analyzed. Consideration of the characteristics of each character in the story, plus the plot of the story determined the coders' choice of concepts. Coders noted whether the concept was implicit or explicit in the story in the respective sections of Form B.

On both forms, only characteristics and explicit concepts which were documented by both page number and quote were accepted. Documentation was not required in the identification of implicit concepts or in the choice of Katz and Braly adjectives as they were not based on references to discrete parts of book content.

The findings of the present study were compared with those of previous related research, namely, "Majority and Minority Americans: An Analysis of Magazine Fiction" by Berelson and Salter;<sup>10</sup> *Intergroup Relations in Teaching Materials* by the American Council on Education, Committee on the Study of Teaching Materials

in *Intergroup Relations*;<sup>11</sup> *The Treatment of Minorities in Secondary School Textbooks* by Marcus;<sup>12</sup> and "Family Living in Textbook Town" by Tannenbaum.<sup>13</sup>

### Findings

*The population.* Based on the criteria of selection detailed above, forty-two children's books constituted the population of this study. Of the forty-two books analyzed, thirteen were about American Indians, two were about Chinese, five were about Japanese, sixteen were about Negroes, and six were about Spanish-Americans. One hundred fourteen minority American characters were identified for analysis.

*Social origin.* In the analysis, thirty-one Indian, seven Chinese, eight Japanese, fifty Negro, and eighteen Spanish-American characters were identified. The total group represented forty-three children, fifteen teenagers, forty-three adults, and thirteen old-timers. The major roles in all of the stories were held by children or teenagers. Books about the Negro, while greater in number, tended to treat teenage characters. Books about Indians, Chinese, and Japanese had no significant teenage characters. Books on Indians and Spanish-Americans emphasized male characters far more than female, while books on Chinese, Japanese, and Negroes generally gave numerically equal representation of male and female characterizations. Indian and Spanish-American stories also contained larger use of male major characters than did the books about the other minorities.

None of the Indians, Chinese, Japanese or Negroes was identified as Roman Catholic while virtually all of the Spanish-

<sup>10</sup>Berelson and Salter, *loc. cit.*

<sup>11</sup>American Council on Education, Committee on the Study of Teaching Materials in *Intergroup Relations*, *loc. cit.*

<sup>12</sup>Lloyd A. Marcus, *loc. cit.*

<sup>13</sup>Tannenbaum, *loc. cit.*

American characters were. Of the minorities surveyed, the Indians, Chinese, and Spanish-Americans appeared to have held to traditional ethnic religious beliefs while the Japanese when identifiable as to religious belief, embraced the basic Protestant tradition of the dominant culture. Protestant Christianity was shown to be the religious belief of approximately one-half of the Negroes in the literature. The other half were unidentifiable as to religious belief.

Ethnic subgroups within the Indian and Spanish-American minorities were represented in the children's fiction. Of the thirty-one books concerning Indians, twenty-seven described Navahos, two described Cherokees, one described Havasupi and one described Seminoles. Books about the Spanish-American minority were equally divided into three ethnic subgroups: Spanish (shepherds and farmers of New Mexico), Mexican (persons of Mexican descent living in the Southwest), and Early-California Spanish (persons tracing their heritage back into the early history of California).

*Physical descriptions.* The physical descriptions of minority American characters portrayed: (1) American Indians as having brown skin and black hair and as wearing traditional costumes; (2) Chinese as having black hair and the epicanthic eye fold and favoring traditional garb; (3) Japanese as having black hair and the epicanthic eye fold and favoring the clothing of the dominant culture; (4) Negroes as generally having brown skin and black kinky hair, but often (in nearly half of the characterizations, especially female) Caucasoid facial features and straight hair; and (5) Spanish-Americans as having brown skin and black hair and favoring traditional costumes only in the case of the Mexican subgroup.

*Status position.* The status position analysis of minority Americans included

analysis of occupation, educational level, economic status, and social class and can be summarized as follows: (1) American Indians in the literature did traditional on-reservation work of shepherding and handicraft, were poor and of the lower-class, and did not aspire to go to college. (2) Chinese were portrayed as semi-skilled workers of the lower socio-economic class with adequate incomes. They valued the schools of the dominant culture and Chinese language school, but were not shown as college oriented. (3) Japanese evinced middle-class standards of living with apparently comfortable incomes. Gardening and floriculture made up the identifiable occupations of the Japanese, and college orientation was inferred in only one book. (4) Negroes were portrayed as having a wide range of vocations and they were shown to value college attendance as a goal. They were evenly distributed as to lower—and middle-class status rating. (5) Spanish-Americans were shown as poor people of the lower-class having no college aspirations and holding a variety of non-professional occupations.

*Personality traits.* The personality traits imputed to minority Americans did not vary to a great extent. "Dependable" and "unselfish" were the first-ranking traits coded for every group. "Authoritarian" was third-ranking for Indians, Chinese, and Spanish-Americans and fifth-ranking for Negroes. Negroes and Chinese were generally portrayed as extroverts while Japanese and American Indians were shown as introverts. Optimism was a high-ranking trait of the Japanese, Negroes, and Spanish-Americans. Generally, minority Americans were portrayed as being individuals and stereotyped personality traits were not found.

*Goals and values.* "Self-realization" was found to be a major goal for all of the minority American characters analyzed in

this study. It ranked first for the Japanese, Negro, and Spanish-American minorities, and second for the American-Indian and Chinese minorities. "Future orientation" was a first-ranking value set for the Chinese and a second-ranking value set for Japanese and Negroes, indicating that these groups looked to the future for self and group improvement. "Past orientation" was a first-ranking value set for the American Indians and Chinese-Americans while it was only eighth-ranking for the Negroes, third-ranking for the Spanish-Americans, and not found for the Japanese. As can be seen, the Chinese were ambivalent with regard to past-future orientation. The Negro group was the only minority for whom the goal of "social acceptance in the dominant culture" ranked first. In comparison, this goal ranked third for the Chinese, sixth for the Spanish-Americans, and seventh for the American Indians and Japanese. Generally, American Indians, Chinese, and Spanish-Americans were shown to have ethnocentric goals and values, while the basic values of the Japanese and Negroes were not ethnocentric.

*Plus-minus position.* The analysis of the plus-minus positions of minority Americans demonstrated that negative attitudes towards the minority characters by their peers or members of the dominant culture were very rarely emphasized by the authors of the literature. One exception to this was the stories about Negroes, where themes of prejudice and intolerance illustrated the Negro's struggle for equality.

*Stereotypes.* The stereotypes imputed to the 114 characters analyzed were measured by the application of the Katz and Braly List of Verbal Stereotypes to the characterizations. The Japanese and Negro minorities were stereotyped as being the most "conventional" of the minority Americans while the American Indians, Chinese, and Spanish-Americans were shown as being

"tradition-loving" and "loyal-to-family ties." The dominant American middle-class virtues related to kindness, industriousness, love of tradition, conventionality, intelligence, neatness, and ambition were high-ranking stereotypes for the groups as a whole. The first hypothesis of the study, that stereotypes of the respective minority groups would not be identified in the literature analyzed, had to be rejected. Stereotypes were identified. However, the large majority of the stereotypes were positive and complimentary. One-fourth of the adjectives on the Katz and Braly list were never chosen as stereotypical of characters in this study, and all but two of the terms that were not chosen were negative and non-complimentary.<sup>14</sup> The implications of these findings must be tempered by the fact that the Katz and Braly List of Verbal Stereotypes was developed in 1933 and the climate of public opinion of which stereotypes are a part may have changed since that time.

*Concepts.* Two hundred twenty-six concepts were identified in the unit analysis and were categorized for each minority under the following headings: (1) Concepts Showing Ethnic Uniqueness, (2) Concepts Showing Minority Group Pride, (3) Concepts Showing Conventionality, (4) Concepts Showing Social Roles (of the given minority) in the Dominant Culture, (5) Concepts Dealing with Prejudice, and (6) Concepts Showing Brotherhood.

The findings of the unit analysis were in basic agreement with those of the individual character analysis of the members of the respective groups. The Japanese and Negro groups were found to be more similar to the majority Americans in cultural values, socio-economic aspirations, and way of life than were the American Indians, Chinese, and Spanish-Americans.

<sup>14</sup>See Table I, page 22.

**Comparisons.** The comparison of the present study with the four selected studies indicated that: (1) The treatment of minority Americans in children's literature evidenced virtually no negative stereotypes, while magazine fiction and school textbooks contained non-complimentary stereotypes. (2) The children's fiction presented a more up-to-date treatment of minority American life than did school textbooks published during the same period. (3) The children's fiction portrayed far more intergroup and interracial cooperation and equality than did the magazine fiction, school textbooks, and elementary readers. (4) The minority Americans were not shown as problem-makers for the dominant culture in the children's fiction as they were in the textbook studies. (5) The children's fiction often portrayed the minorities as aspiring to middle-class values and standards of living while the textbook studies indicated that minority groups had lower socio-economic standards and goals.

On the basis of the findings of the present study and a comparison of those findings with previous, related research, the second and third hypotheses of this study can be supported. The treatment of minority Americans in the literature of the present study dignified the differences in race, creed, and custom of minority citizens and, for the most part, emphasized similarities rather than differences between minority and majority Americans with regard to behaviors, attitudes, and values.

### Conclusions

The results obtained from the analysis of the data derived from the population of the present investigation warrant the following conclusions:

1. Recent children's fiction generally portrays American Indians, Chinese, Japanese, Negroes, and Spanish-American

as having adopted the dominant middle-class American values related to cleanliness, kindness, intelligence, ambition, hard work, and success.

2. Recent children's literature generally contains complimentary stereotypes of present-day American Indians, Chinese, Japanese, Negroes, and Spanish-Americans. Middle-class Anglo-American virtues make up the new stereotypes imputed to these minorities by the authors of the literature. Traditional, non-complimentary stereotypes have largely disappeared from the literature. The image of the Negro in children's fiction represents an almost exact reversal of traditional Negro stereotypes with one exception—"Negroes are musical."
3. Recent children's literature generally portrays American Indians, Chinese, and Spanish-Americans as having lower-class socio-economic status. Negroes are portrayed as being evenly distributed as to lower-and middle-class status rating. Japanese are shown to be of the middle-class in socio-economic status.
4. Recent children's literature contains occupational stereotypes of all minority groups except the Negro. The Negro is represented in a wide range of occupations, including white-collar jobs and the professions, which are not recorded for the other minorities. The common stereotypes of the Indian craftsman, the Chinese cook, the Mexican shopkeeper, the Japanese gardener, and the Spanish shepherd are perpetuated in the recent literature.
5. Recent children's literature, with one exception, portrays the Negro minority as the only minority whose members seek higher education and attend college. The exception is found in the

American Indian minority where one college educated character is portrayed. The findings leading to this conclusion may be in part due to the large number of upper-grade books about teenage Negroes, and the lack of such books for the other minorities in the population of this study. But it also relates to findings of the present investigation showing the Negro adult in white-collar and professional positions.

6. Recent children's literature portrays Japanese and Negro minorities as being more thoroughly assimilated into the dominant culture and as having more social interaction with Anglo-Americans than the American Indians, Chinese, and Spanish-Americans. The Japanese and Negro minorities are shown to have less ethnic or racial identification than the other minorities and are portrayed as living among Anglo-Americans in integrated neighborhoods. In contrast, Chinese are shown to live in "Chinatown," American Indians are portrayed as living only on reservations, and Spanish-Americans are depicted in rural settings.
7. Recent children's literature portrays American Indians and Spanish-Americans as living a simple and virile life, close to nature. These minorities are generally pictured as living serenely, with few material comforts, in remote and sparsely populated areas of southwestern United States. They are said to have an innate understanding of, and reverence for nature and a particular fondness for animal life.
8. Recent children's fiction about American Indians and Spanish-Americans emphasizes male characters and perpetuates the male-superiority tradition, while children's fiction about Chinese,

Japanese, and Negroes presents no disparity between the number or importance of male and female characters, and does not perpetuate male-superiority in the characterizations.

9. Recent children's fiction about American Indians, Chinese, and Spanish-Americans contains no portrayals of individuals who have lost or abandoned their ethnic culture and are assimilated into the dominant culture. The authors of the literature portray these minorities as taking pride in their ethnic cultures and clinging to traditional patterns of life while accepting some of the material goods and economic motivations of the dominant culture.
10. Recent children's fiction stereotypes the American Indians and the Mexican-American subgroup of the Spanish-American minority as wearing their ethnic garb. This is especially evident in the primary-grade books, which utilize a greater number of pictures than the intermediate-and upper-grade level books. Though not always identified by name of tribe, Indians are illustrated in the literature wearing moccasins, headbands, turquoise and silver jewelry, and other traditional garb of Indian tribes, especially the Navaho and Hopi, who inhabit the southwestern area of the United States. Mexican-Americans are depicted in the fiction as sombrero-and sandal-wearing innocents who revel in traditional holidays and customs. This stereotype of dress perpetuates the image of the Mexican-American as a friendly foreigner and a tourist attraction in the Southwest.
11. Recent children's literature generally portrays Negroes as being brown-skinned people who often have caucasoid facial features and straight hair.

Negro females are pictured in the literature as generally lighter in color and more Caucasian in appearance than Negro males. This new image of the Negro differs from that found in earlier literature which caricatured the Negro by over-emphasizing Negroid facial features, kinky hair, and black skin. It appears that the authors and publishers of the recent literature, while emphasizing themes of social equality in the books about Negroes, have deemphasized physical differences between Negroes and Anglo-Americans by portraying light-skinned Negroes as representative of the Negro minority.

12. In recent children's literature, social acceptance in the dominant Anglo-American culture is the predominant theme in books about the Negro minority, while it is only a minor theme in books about American Indians, Chinese, Japanese, and Spanish-Americans. Negroes are portrayed in the literature as having to overcome prejudice and social restrictions in their struggle for equal social and economic opportunity in the United States. American Indians, Chinese, and Spanish-Americans are portrayed as having little contact with Anglo-Americans because of their geographical isolation or "segregated" living conditions and apparent ethnocentrism. The Japanese minority is portrayed in the literature as encountering no prejudice and as being completely accepted by the Anglo-Americans.
13. Recent children's fiction is more complimentary to minority Americans when compared with literature analyzed in previous studies. Non-complimentary stereotypes and the "minority as a social problem" concept

that were found in previous studies are not to be found in the children's literature of the present study. The children's literature contained themes of brotherhood and racial equality, while in school textbooks such themes were slighted and often were not to be found.

14. Recent children's literature dignifies the differences in race, creed, and custom of the minority Americans, and emphasizes the similarities rather than the differences between minority and majority Americans with regard to behavior, attitudes, and values.
15. Recent children's literature contains a dearth of books about Negroes in the picture book and primary-grade reading levels, while upper-grade books about Negroes are not uncommon. There are more stories about Negro teenagers than there are about young Negro children of early elementary school age. It can be concluded that intermediate- and upper-grade books about Negro teenagers allow for more sophisticated treatment of the problem of social acceptance faced by Negroes which is the major theme in the literature about Negroes.
16. Recent children's literature contains a dearth of books concerning American Indian, Chinese, Japanese, and Spanish-American teenagers and their problems and aspirations, while stories of Negro teenagers are numerous. The books concerning minorities other than the Negro, primarily portray child-family relationships and do not emphasize themes of social acceptance. The readers of the literature concerning minority Americans will have Negro teenage characters with which to identify, but they will find almost no other minority American teenage characters portrayed in the literature.

### Recommendations

The results obtained from the analysis of the data derived from the population of the present investigation warrant recommendations for action programs and for further research which are presented below.

#### Action Programs

On the basis of the results of this study, the following recommendations for action programs are suggested:

1. The use of contemporary children's literature about minority Americans should be increased in supplementing reading and social studies textbooks in the public schools. This recommendation is imperative if a balanced and "culturally fair" presentation of American life is to be afforded to school children.
2. Textbooks should be made available which contain stories about or portrayals of minority Americans living in the dominant culture as citizens having equal rights and sharing in the American way of life.
3. Authors and publishers of children's literature should increase: (a) the number of books concerning Negroes in the picture book and primary-grade reading levels, and (b) the number of books concerning American Indian, Chinese, Japanese, and Spanish-American teenagers in upper-grade reading levels.
4. Authors and publishers of children's literature should increase the number of books showing American Indians, Chinese, and Spanish-Americans who live among and associate with Anglo-Americans.
5. Authors and publishers of children's literature should consciously avoid occupational stereotypes and mislead-

ing overgeneralizations concerning the ethnic background, culture, and traditions of minority Americans. This recommendation particularly relates to portrayals of American Indians, Chinese, and Spanish-Americans.

#### Further Research

The results of this investigation emphasized the need for the following types of research:

1. Content analysis studies should be made of the characterizations of individual American minority groups in children's fictional literature. The findings of the present study warrant further investigation.
2. Content analysis studies should be made of the characterizations, concepts, and stereotypes of minority Americans in children's fictional literature published before 1945. Such studies would provide a stronger basis for evaluation of, and comparison with the present study and future studies of contemporary literature. Previous research along these lines has been very informal and valuatinal.
3. A qualitative and quantitative comparison should be made of recently published books having historical settings and recently published books having contemporary settings. This kind of research might indicate first, a change in the historical portrayal of the minority Americans and second, the proportions of the literature which deal with the past, present, and future realities.
4. A qualitative and quantitative comparison should be made of children's fiction appearing in the Wilson and the American Library Association guides to children's literature and children's fiction not listed therein to

determine (a) differences between such literature, and (b) possible biases of the guides.

5. Experimental studies should be made to test the assumption that attitudes favorable to minority Americans are developed by readers of contemporary children's fiction concerning minority Americans. Such literature is reputed to effect an understanding of minority Americans and a reduction of preju-

dice, but this assumption needs more than judgmental support.

6. Investigations should be made of current stereotypes of racial, ethnic, and religious groups in America. Experimental and descriptive studies are needed to check the present validity of past enumerations of stereotypes as they pertain to various minority groups in the United States.

Table I

**Rank Order Enumeration of the Stereotypes  
of 114 Minority American Characters  
on the Katz and Braly List  
of Verbal Stereotypes**

|                              |                               |                             |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Kind (46)                    | Conservative (4)              | Sophisticated (1)           |
| Industrious (36)             | Happy-go-lucky (4)            | Suave (1)                   |
| Tradition-loving (32)        | Pleasure-loving (4)           | Suspicious (1)              |
| Conventional (30)            | Straightforward (4)           | Witty (1)                   |
| Loyal to family<br>ties (29) | Talkative (4)                 | Cowardly*                   |
| Intelligent (23)             | Efficient (3)                 | Extremely<br>nationalistic* |
| Neat (23)                    | Progressive (3)               | Frivolous*                  |
| Ambitious (20)               | Quick-tempered (3)            | Gluttonous*                 |
| Artistic (18)                | Revengeful (3)                | Grasping*                   |
| Generous (18)                | Arrogant (2)                  | Humorless*                  |
| Musical (16)                 | Imitative (2)                 | Individualistic*            |
| Reserved (16)                | Impulsive (2)                 | Materialistic*              |
| Practical (15)               | Lazy (2)                      | Mercenary*                  |
| Alert (12)                   | Loud (2)                      | Methodical*                 |
| Faithful (12)                | Ostentatious (2)              | Passionate*                 |
| Gregarious (11)              | Stolid (2)                    | Physically dirty*           |
| Superstitious (11)           | Aggressive (1)                | Ponderous*                  |
| Courteous (10)               | Argumentative (1)             | Pugnacious*                 |
| Honest (9)                   | Brilliant (1)                 | Quarrelsome*                |
| Quiet (9)                    | Conceited (1)                 | Radical*                    |
| Very religious (9)           | Cruel (1)                     | Rude*                       |
| Meditative (8)               | Deceitful (1)                 | Sensual*                    |
| Boastful (6)                 | Evasive (1)                   | Shrewd*                     |
| Imaginative (6)              | Ignorant (1)                  | Slovenly*                   |
| Persistent (6)               | Jovial (1)                    | Stupid*                     |
| Sensitive (6)                | Naive (1)                     | Suggestible*                |
| Sportsmanlike (6)            | Scientifically-<br>minded (1) | Treacherous*                |
| Stubborn (5)                 | Sly (1)                       | Unreliable*                 |

\*Not chosen as stereotypical of minority Americans in the present study.

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